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SUBJECT: MACAU: 2009 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM

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Per reftel request, this is Consulate General Hong Kong's submission on Macau for the 2009 Country Reports on Terrorism. Point of contact is Jose Sandoval, Economic/Political Section, telephone: 852-2841-2126, e-mail address: sandovaljl@state.gov

Macau

Macau is neither home to nor does it support terrorist groups. However, Macau's position as a major international gambling center makes it a potential site for money laundering and terrorist financing activities.

Macau's financial regulatory authorities directed banks and other financial institutions to continuously search for terrorist financing networks and accounts using lists of individuals and entities designated by the U.S. under relevant authorities, as well as the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee's consolidated list of individuals and entities associated with al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and Usama bin Ladin.

Macau is a member of the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering and completed a mutual evaluation of its Anti-Money Laundering (AML) regime in 2007. In response to recommendations of the APG evaluation, Macau authorities have taken steps to improve compliance with suspicious transactions reporting (STR) requirements in banks, casinos, and professional associations, but the threshold reporting limits remain well above international norms. Macau does not have reporting requirements for cross-border currency movements.

In May 2009, Macau joined the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units through its Financial Intelligence Office (FIO), an independent government unit under Macau's Secretary for Economy and Finance. The FIO played an essential role in Macau's AML regime by collecting and analyzing STRs, providing AML assistance to local authorities, raising the public's AML awareness within Macau, and sharing information with overseas counterparts.

In September 2009, the Macau Monetary Authority (acronym AMCM) strengthened its AML guidelines for financial institutions, money changers and remittance agents by mandating enhanced customer due diligence measures and the compulsory employment of AMCM-approved AML compliance officers.

Macau cooperated internationally in counterterrorism efforts through INTERPOL and other security-focused organizations within the Asia Pacific Region. Macau's law enforcement and customs agencies participated in USG-sponsored training in bulk cash smuggling detection, weapons of mass destruction proliferation awareness workshops, and complex financial investigation techniques.

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